

EASTERN AREA COORDINATING GROUP CHARTER 2008

MISSION:

The Eastern Area Coordinating Group, hereinafter referred to as EACG, is established to further interagency cooperation, communication and coordination, and to implement interagency wildland fire management direction in the Eastern Geographic Area as defined in Chapter 21.1 of the National Interagency Mobilization Guide.

AUTHORITIES:

Interagency Agreement between Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of the United States Department of the Interior and the Forest Service of the United States Department of Agriculture commonly called the Joint Powers Agreement.

Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-313, 92 Stat. 365; as amended; 16 U.S.C. 2101 (note), 2101-2103, 2103a, 2103b, 2104-2105).

The cooperative wildland fire agreements between the U.S. Forest Service and States.

SCOPE:

The EACG shall only deal with issues and opportunities of an area-wide nature. Individual agencies' business will be conducted at the local, state, or compact level. Items having broader influence will be addressed after consideration by the compacts and individual agencies on a sub-regional geographic basis.

For EACG members participating in the Fire Planning Analysis (FPA) budget development process, the EACG will serve as an oversight and conflict resolution body if the Fire Planning Unit (FPU) line officers are unable to come to a consensus.

MEMBERSHIP:

The EACG will be composed of the lead fire manager or his/her designee from each of the following organizations:

- USDA Forest Service
- USDA Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry
- National Park Service
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- State Forest Fire Compacts
 - * Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Commission
 - * Mid-Atlantic Interstate Forest Fire Protection Compact
 - * Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact
 - * Big Rivers Forest Fire Management Compact

The organization representative will be responsible to ensure that respective organization policy and procedures are maintained and administrators are informed. The members will coordinate recommendations for organizational acceptance and implementation. They will serve at the discretion of their organizations. Attendance at all meetings will be open to anyone who has an interest to attend.

EACG member organizations may be represented on the EACG by one or more individuals representing differing units of the organization; however, each organizational member will have one voice only when decisions are made by EACG.

CORE FUNCTIONS: The objective of the EACG is to provide the following core functions:

1. Provide interagency leadership and coordinated implementation of current policies, directions, and standards for wildland fire activities.
2. Instill professionalism in all aspects of wildland fire management and develop a full partnership, trust, and mutual assistance among the wildland fire protection entities.
3. Recommend a unified course of action to geographic agency/organization administrators in order to promote safety and provide oversight in all aspects of wildland fire incident management.
4. Serve as a Geographic Area clearinghouse and forum for the identification of interagency wildland fire management issues and their solutions.
 - a. Support and promote the role of wildland fire in ecosystem management, wildland/urban/rural interface, wildland fire prevention and education, and fuels and resource management.
 - b. Manage geographic area interagency safety and training programs.
 - c. Provide oversight to national training nominations at a minimum of 520/620.
 - d. Establish task groups/teams to address area wide issues.
5. Serve as a geographic focal point for requests for interagency action to and from the national and local level.
6. Provide a communication link among local, state, tribal, and federal entities.
7. Facilitate efficiencies in all wildland fire operations at all levels, including:
 - a. Select and manage Eastern Area Incident Management Team (s), and nominate candidates for area command teams.
 - b. Provide oversight to the Eastern Area Coordination Center (EACC).

- c. Establish when needed, geographic area Multi-agency Coordination Group (MAC).
 - d. Provide oversight and approval of the Eastern Area Supplement to the National Mobilization Guide.
 - e. Assess and promote long-term Incident Management Team (IMT) development and maintenance. Advocate for developmental opportunities for the IMT and future team members.
8. Provide oversight and direction for EACG members in the Eastern Area participating in the Fire Planning Analysis (FPA) budgeting process.
- a. EACG FPA Working Team will identify how Certification and Approval of analysis runs will be accomplished in the GA. An approved list of “technical specialists” will be used as FPU’s participate in the certification process.
 - b. The FPA Working Team will attempt to resolve disputes and conflicts regarding the analysis process or implementation of FPA in the Eastern Area FPUs. The FPA Working Team will provide technical oversight for FPU Preparedness Module analysis. Should consensus not be reached by FPU teams the following conflict resolution process will be followed:
 - i. First level of resolution would be by consensus of the signatories of the Charter for the FPU.
 - ii. Second level of resolution would be by the EACG FPA Working Team.
 - iii. Third level of resolution would be by consensus of EACG FPA participating partners.
 - iv. Fourth level of resolution would be by consensus of EACG Charter signatories (Line Officers).
 - c. Any EACG member participating in the FPA process has the option, in accordance with nationally established FPA timelines, to withdraw their Administrative Unit from an FPU with approval of that FPU and join another FPU with approval of that FPU, or create its own FPU with approval of affected partners.

OPERATING PROCEDURES:

Each organizational member shall have an equal voice in resolving issues before the EACG. EACG prefers to make decisions by consensus. Consensus is defined as the willingness to support and follow a course of action even though an individual member does not believe it to be the best. If a member or members cannot reach consensus, the reasons must be clearly articulated. In the event that consensus cannot be reached on an issue, the issue will be tabled until the next meeting, at which time it will be revisited. Meeting is defined as a traditional meeting or conference call. During the intervening time, the Chair and/or individual members will consult with disagreeing parties to attempt to clarify and resolve obstacles.

In the event that consensus cannot be reached on an issue at the second meeting, the EACG may resolve the issue by a 2/3-majority vote of the EACG members. Any member may call the issue to a vote. The Chair would then be responsible to carry out the vote on the issue. EACG members is defined as all EACG members as listed in the EACG Charter, whether they are present at the meeting or not. If they are NOT present then a phone call, email, or similar “vote” shall be taken within five business days (Mon.-Fri) excluding holidays. The Chair would be

responsible for contacting and recording the vote of absent members and notifying the full membership of the results.

If, following a decision made by vote, a member agency is unable to implement EACG's decision, that member should so advise EACG immediately.

OFFICERS: EACG officers will consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Past Chairperson and an Executive Secretary

EACG Chair and Vice-Chair and Past Chair will serve for a one-year term on a calendar year basis. These officers shall be the designated EACG representatives from the participating agencies/compacts. The dates of their service are determined by the Chair and Vice Chair matrix below.

Chairperson:

The Chairperson is responsible for the following: calling meetings and conference calls, conducting the meetings and conference calls, representing EACG at National Meetings and on National Conference calls, finalizing all meeting and conference call minutes in cooperation with the Executive Secretary and distribution of these minutes in a timely manner, ensuring tasks assigned to EACG members and Working Teams are completed and timelines are adhered to, convening the EA MAC group, preparation of end of year archives, and other duties as decided by EACG members.

Vice-Chairperson:

The Vice-Chairperson will assume the full duties of the Chairperson during any absence of the Chairperson and will be the next Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson is responsible for helping with meeting arrangements working in conjunction with the EACG member of the host agency/compact, is responsible for helping with preparing the agenda for meetings and conference calls in cooperation with the Executive Secretary and Chairperson and distribution on the pre-agreed upon timelines. The Vice-Chairperson may attend National meetings with/without the Chairperson and participate in National conference calls, as needed.

Past-Chairperson:

The Past-Chairperson will assist the other officers during any absence of the Chairperson or Vice Chair and provide continuity for the new Chair. The Past-Chairperson is responsible for assisting the Chair and Vice Chair with any business that is requested.

Executive Secretary:

A permanent Executive Secretary will be provided by the EACC and serve at the discretion of the EACG. The Executive Secretary will be responsible for the following: taking meeting and conference call minutes and ensuring that they are edited, filed, and distributed in a timely manner, work in conjunction with the Chair, Vice Chair and Past Chair to prepare and distribute meeting and conference call agendas, track and remind the Chair of timelines for all EACG business, ensure products from the Working Teams are reproduced and distributed to EACG members, ensure the yearly archives are prepared and distributed for storage. The Executive Secretary and Chairperson will determine the extent of support needed at each meeting (e.g., note taking, recorder, portable computer, facilitator, etc.).

Office Terms: *

YEARS	CHAIR	VICE-CHAIR	PAST-CHAIR
2019	MID ATLANTIC	NA S&PF	USFS R9
2020	NA S&PF	NORTHEAST	MID ATLANTIC
2012	NORTHEAST	NPS	NA S&PF
2013	NPS	BIG RIVERS	NORTHEAST
2014	BIG RIVERS	USFWS	NPS
2015	USFWS	GREAT LAKES	BIG RIVERS
2016	GREAT LAKES	BIA	USFWS
2017	BIA	USFS R9	GREAT LAKES
2018	USFS R9	MID ATLANTIC	BIA
	Then Repeat Cycle		

*Rotation is subject to change with approval of a majority of EACG members.
Rotational changes will not require a re-signing of current Charter.

Decision Making:

The EACG makes decisions through consensus of the group as defined elsewhere in the Charter. When prompt decisions need to be made before the next conference call or meeting, a conference call will be made with available EACG members to address the issue. If a quorum is not achieved on the call, a second call may be necessary. If time does not permit follow up calls, a decision will be made using the available members.

WORKING TEAMS:

Working Teams may be established under the Eastern Area Coordinating Group to provide an interagency approach to specific areas of wildland fire management. Working Teams are active until disbanded by the EACG. Ad Hoc Committees may be established by the EACG or by a Working Team for specific tasks. Ad Hoc Committees, upon completion of its task, shall sunset unless an additional task is assigned.

Each Working Team will operate under the following guidelines unless a Charter approved by the EACG designates otherwise:

Membership: Each Working Team membership is open to all member organizations. Each Working Team will have one EACG member assigned as liaison. The EACG Executive Secretary will maintain current working team membership list.

Officers: Each Working Team will elect a chairperson for a 1-year term that will be responsible for scheduling team meetings, setting the agenda, and reporting accomplishments to the EACG. Following a year of tenure, the Vice-Chairperson will serve a 1-year term as Chair, and will assume the duties of the Chair during any absence of the Chairperson.

Meetings: Each Working Team will meet as often as deemed necessary to accomplish assigned tasks. Each Team may set up task groups and/or assign specialists to assist as needed.

Reports, Products, Recommendations: Final reports, products, and recommendations by any working Team will be presented to the Eastern Area Coordinating Group for action or approval.

Objectives: See attached Working Team Charters (attached as appendices) for a list of objectives of each Working Team.

MEETINGS:

The EACG will meet at least once per year. More frequent meetings may be held if deemed necessary by the members. The Chairperson will establish meeting dates and times.

Any cost associated with meeting logistics will be borne by the meeting host's agency unless otherwise agreed.

Conference calls will be set up by the Executive Secretary at the direction of the Chair.

ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW:

It is important that EACG recommendations receive formal organizational review, acceptance, and distribution for implementation. Operational changes, which do not include policy changes or costs, may be implemented directly through their appropriate channels. Items requiring policy changes, modifications, or costs will be submitted for approval by organizational administrators.

FINANCES:

Each EACG and Working Team member organization will fund any and all expenses incurred by the members in performance of duties as a member of the EACG and/or a working team. No EACG or working team member will incur expenses other than personal obligations without the authorization of member agency/organization administrators.

Finances related to the operational expenses of any shared facilities, staffing or other such cooperative operations are outlined in Annual Operations Plans and become attachments to this document when approved by the member signatories. This includes the EACC Annual Operations Plan and any subsequent plans that come out of the FPA process.

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

**Regional Director, BIA
Midwest Regional Office**

Date

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Regional Director, BIA
Eastern Regional Office

Date

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Regional Director, NPS
Midwest Regional Office

Date

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Regional Director, NPS
Northeast Regional Office

Date

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Regional Director, NPS
National Capitol Regional Office

Date

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

**Regional Director, FWS
Great Lakes and Big Rivers Region**

Date

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

**Regional Director, FWS
Northeast Region**

Date

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOREST SERVICE:

Regional Forester
Eastern Region, NFS

Date

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOREST SERVICE:

Area Director
Northeastern Area, S&PF

Date

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years

STATE FOREST FIRE PROTECTION COMPACTS

Chair
Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact

Date

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years

STATE FOREST FIRE PROTECTION COMPACTS

_____	_____
Chair, Executive Committee	Date
Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Commission	

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years

STATE FOREST FIRE PROTECTION COMPACTS

Chair
Middle Atlantic Interstate
Forest Fire Protection Compact

Date

APPROVALS:

Term of this charter shall be effective immediately upon signature below and will remain in effect for five years. The charter will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed but the term will not exceed 5 years.

STATE FOREST FIRE PROTECTION COMPACTS

Chair
Big Rivers Forest Fire Management Compact

Date